



NORWEGIAN AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE MID-ATLANTIC WASHINGTON DC CHAPTER NEWS

Your Virtual Office & Link To Services In The Washington Mid-Atlantic Region

COMMODORE SKRAM ADDRESSES NACCMA NETWORKING BREAKFAST

Washington Networking Forums Begin with Norwegian Coast Guard Chief

Washington, DC 25 May 2010 -- Commodore Arild-Inge Skram, Commandant of the Norwegian Coast Guard gave a private briefing to NACCMA Washington members on the Coast Guard state of affairs and challenges in Norway's marine waters.

The breakfast briefing was sponsored by NACCMA Washington members, Raytheon International and NAMMO. Peter Sioma, Vice Chair of NACCMA and President/CEO NAMMO welcomed members. John Miller, Raytheon Director of International Business Development hosted and introduced Commodore Skram.



Cdre Skram, & John Miller, Raytheon

The Briefing

A major part of the Norwegian economy is based on maritime activities such as fishery, oil and gas and shipping. The Norwegian Coast Guard is one of Norway's primary assets to uphold jurisdiction and sovereign rights at sea, and preserve marine resources for future generations.



The area of responsibility for the Norwegian Coast Guard is 2.2 million square kilometers, which is about seven times the size of the Norwegian mainland. It is the largest exclusive economic zone (EEZ) in Europe. In addition Norway has established a fishery protection zone around Svalbard and a fishery zone around Jan Mayen. These

areas contain huge fish resources, and may contain oil and gas.

“As you can see from the map”, said Commodore Skram, “there are two areas in the Norwegian Sea and the Barents Sea that are outside any 200 nm zones. We call them Loop holes because they are international waters and therefore outside almost any regulations we exercise within our zones, however the resources in these areas, especially fish, are tightly connected to the resources within our national zones.”



Modernization

The Norwegian Coast Guard is part of the Royal Norwegian Navy, but it has separate vessels, helicopters and technological needs to cover its responsibilities in the Norwegian Exclusive Economic and Fisheries Zones. It operates with a budget of \$140 million USD and 700 personnel.



As part of a modernization program to be completed by 2012, its operational assets consist of 15 vessels of mixed class (10 deep water, 5 coastal), that include vessels with helicopter carrying capacity, a Nato ship certified for the new Nato Submarine Rescue System (NSRS), 8 NH90 helicopters and in its Barents class a liquid gas powered clean class vessel.



Missions

A guiding principle of the Norwegian Coast Guard is “Always Present” to be out in the Norwegian EEZ and territorial waters. About 90 % of the Norwegian Coast Guard’s tasks are civilian related. Fisheries control is a primary responsibility with as many as 20 nations licensed to fish in Norwegian waters. Each year, the Norwegian Coast Guard inspects over 1700 vessels for compliance and enforcement of fishery regulations.



While search and rescue is its first priority, the Norwegian Coast Guard also provides assistance at-sea and to communities up North, supports marine research, conducts offshore tasks related to energy production, and oil on ice containment, a huge challenge in the Arctic environment.



Future Issues

As climate conditions in the High North change, more “blue water” routes may emerge raising questions on new activities in the Arctic region. Some ship transiting has occurred between Asia and Russia, but more routes may come in the future. What are the consequences with this develop and how do Arctic nations prepare for these challenges? This is an issue for the future and long-term planning in Norway.



Norway Russia Cooperation

Norway and Russia have worked together to protect shared fishery resources like cod and haddock which migrate across national boundaries. A system of annual quotas and licenses enforced by each nation is used. A proposal for a permanent sea boundary is under consideration by Norway and Russia.



A Q&A session which followed the presentation by Commodore Skram covered maritime security off Norway, trends in fishery arrests, planning or use of unmanned helicopters or other remotely controlled surveillance aircraft, future oil exploration in the Arctic, and challenges with defense budgets in the future.

Pete Sioma, NAMMO & John Miller, Raytheon Thank
Cdre Skram on behalf of NACCMA Washington